{See Note at end.}

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GOD.

PASSAGES FROM VARIOUS WRITERS, SELECTED BY MRS. E. R. SUNDERLAND.

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DEVOTIONAL READINGS.

Lord, thou hast been our dwelling-place in all generations. Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God.

Psalm xc.

Of old hast thou laid the foundations of the earth; and the heavens are the work of thy hands. They shall perish, but thou shalt endure. Yea, all of them shall wax old like a garment: as a vesture shalt thou change them, and they shall be changed: but thou art the same, and thy years shall have no end.

Psalm cii.

Hast thou not known, hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary? There is no searching of his understanding.

He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might he increaseth strength. Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall: but they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint.

Isaiah xl.

O Lord, thou hast searched me, and known me. Thou knowest my down-sitting and mine up-rising; thou understandest my thought afar off. Thou compassest my path and my lying down, and art acquainted with all my ways. For there is not a word in my tongue, but lo, O Lord, thou knowest it altogether. Thou hast beset me behind and before, and laid thy hand upon me.

Such knowledge is too wonderful for

me; it is high, I cannot attain unto it. Whither shall I go from thy Spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there. If I make my bed in the grave, behold thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me. If I say, surely the darkness shall cover me, even the night shall be light about me. Yea, the darkness hideth not from thee, but the night shineth as the day; the darkness and the light are both alike to thee.

Psalm cxxxix.

Nothing is closed to God. He is present in our conscience. He intervenes in our thoughts. I tell thee, a sacred spirit dwells within us, the observer and preserver of our good and evil deeds.

Seneca.

The paths to God are more in number than the breathings of created beings. Whatever road I take joins the highway that leads to thee.

Ride thou on for eternity through the empyrean, mounted on thy ideal,—thou shalt not stride beyond his threshold! Soar thou beyond all limit to the roof of the universe, thou shalt behold one tile of his dwelling — one tile, no more.

God hath made all atoms in space mirrors, and fronteth each one with his perfect face.

Wouldst thou know where I found the Supreme? One step beyond myself. Behind the veil of self shines unseen the beauty of the Loved One.

Which is the great name of God? Tell me his least name, and I will give thee back his greatest.

All nations and languages repeat the name of God; even infancy lisps it; Allah! Taugari! Yezdan! Elohim! Yet cannot his praise be duly expressed by mortal, till the dumb man shall be eloquent, and stocks and stones find voice; till the silent universe rejoices in language.

Mediæval Persian Poets.

How dear, how soothing to man, arises the idea of God, peopling the lonely place, effacing the scars of our mistakes and disappointments! When we have broken our God of tradition, and ceased from our God of rhetoric, then may God fire the heart with his presence. It is the doubling of the heart itself, nay, the infinite enlargement of the heart with a power of growth to a new infinity on every side. It inspires in man an infallible trust. He has not the conviction, but the sight, that the best is the true, and may in that thought easily dismiss all particular uncertainties and fears, and adjourn to the sure revelation of time the solution of his private riddles. He is sure that his welfare is dear to the heart of being. But if he would know what the great God speaketh, he must go into his closet and shut the door, as Jesus said. God will not make himself manifest to cowards. He must greatly listen to himself, withdrawing himself from all the accents of other men's devotions. Even their prayers are hurtful to him, until he have made his own. * * He that finds God a sweet, enveloping thought to him never counts his company. When I sit in that presence, who shall dare to come in?

R. W. Emerson.

Value of Belief in God.

The profoundest of all human wants is the want of God. The sense of God is the only spring by which the crushing weight of sense, of the world, and temptation can be withstood. It has accomplished more, it has strengthened men to do and suffer more, than all other principles. It can sustain the mind against all other powers. Without God our existence has no support, our life no aim, our improvements no permanence, our best labors no sure and enduring results, our spiritual weakness no power to lean upon, and our noblest aspirations and desires no pledge of being realized in a better state. Struggling virtue has no friend; suffering virtue no promise of victory. Take away God, and life becomes mean, and

man poorer than the brute. I am accustomed to speak of the greatness of human nature; but it is great only through its parentage; great because descended from God, because connected with a goodness and power from which it is to be enriched for ever; and nothing but the consciousness of this connection can give that hope of elevation through which alone the mind is to rise to true strength and liberty. * *

Every man's elevation is to be measured first and chiefly by his conception of God; and to attain a just, and bright, and quickening knowledge of him, is the highest aim of thought. In truth, the great end of the universe, of revelation, of life, is to develop in us the idea of God. To know God is to attain to the sublimest conception in the universe. We believe that his infinite perfection is the only sufficient object and true resting-place for the insatiable desires and unlimited capacities of the human mind, and that, without him, our noblest sentiments, admiration, veneration, hope and love, would wither and decay. We believe, too, that the love of God is not only essential to happiness, but to the strength and perfection of all the virtues.

Wm. Ellery Channing.

Nothing is long fruitful of delight when divorced from the consciousness of God; nothing thrives that is at enmity with God. * * The human consciousness of the infinite God will show itself, not merely in belief or prayer and thanksgiving, but by the legitimate action of every limb of the body and every faculty of the spirit. * * I will not say that a man cannot be honest without a distinct consciousness of his relation to God; but I must say that consciousness of God is a great help to honesty in the business of a shop, or the business of a nation. * * Trust in God will do two things. It will keep you from many an error: nobody knows how great a gain this is until he has tried. Then it will help you after you have wandered from the way. Fallen, you will not despair, but rise the wiser and the stronger for the fall. * * * The consciousness of my connection with God, of my obligation to God, of his providence watching over all — this, and the effort to keep every law he has written in my constitution, enlarges my capacity to love men. The normal and conscious worship of the infinite God will enlarge every faculty, and enhance its quality and quantity of delight.

Theodore Parker.

Mankind will bear a great deal, but it will not long bear the denial of a God of love, the hope of being perfect, and a divine faith in immortality. These things are more precious than all physical discoveries. It really does not make much matter to the race in general whether the whole science of geology were proved to-morrow to have been proceeding on a wrong basis, or whether the present theory of force be true or not; but it would make the most serious matter to mankind, if they knew for certain to-morrow that there was no God of justice and love, or that immortality was a fond invention. The amount of suppressed and latent belief in these truths, which we should then discover in men who now deny them, would be perhaps the strangest thing we should observe; but it hath not entered into the heart of man to imagine the awfulness of the revolution which, following on this denial, would penetrate into every corner of human nature and human life.

Stopford Brooke.

One thought I have, my ample creed,
So deep it is and broad,
And equal to my every need,—
It is the thought of God.

Each morn unfolds some fresh surprise;
I feast at Life's full board;
And rising in my inner skies
Shines forth the thought of God.

At night my gladness is my prayer;
I drop my daily load,
And every care is pillowed there
Upon the thought of God.

I ask not far before to see,
But take in trust my road;
Life, death and immortality
Are in my thought of God.

Be still the light upon my way,
My pilgrim staff and rod,
My rest by night, my strength by day,
O blessed thought of God!

F. L. Hosmer.

To me, I confess, it seems a very considerable thing, just to believe in God;—difficult, indeed, to avoid honestly, but not easy to accomplish worthily, and impossible to compass perfectly;—a thing not lightly to be professed, but rather humbly to be sought; not to be found at the end of any syllogism, but in the inmost fountains of purity and affection; not the sudden gift of intellect, but to be earned by a loving and brave life. It is indeed the greatest thing allowed to mankind,—the germ of every lesser greatness: and he who can say, "I have faith in the Almighty," makes a higher boast than if he could declare "The Mediterranean is in my garden, and mine is every branch that waves upon its shores, from the cedars of Lebanon to the pine upon the Alps." It is no outward change, no shifting in time or place, but only the loving meditation of the pure in heart, that can re-awaken the Eternal from the sleep within our souls; that can render him a reality again, and vindicate for him once more his ancient name of The Living God.

How profoundly this is true—that in divine things the little child may know what the great philosopher may miss—will appear, if you only think what God is, and whether he is likely to be discovered on any explorer's track or by any artifice of calculation. Two things science enables us to do, from which all its triumph springs. It shows us how to put the parts and products of nature *into true classes;* and it qualifies us to *foresee* phenomena else unsuspected. But God is neither a being to be classified, nor a phenomenon to be foreseen. Such procedures of the mind are quite inapplicable, except to the finite and the transient; and he who goes forth upon them may find whatever begins to be, but not that which forever is; may rightly dispose of this and that, but never meet the All in All. As well might you attempt to put space under your microscope, or weigh gravitation in your scales. If you believe that God exists, and understands your words when you call him "infinite" and "eternal," you cannot expect to find him as *one object among many*, but as a *spirit in all*, the living reality of all appearance; the firmament of thought that holds the stars; the omnipresent deep that throws up the tides of history and the ripplings of private care; the sole power of the universe without; the archetype of the free soul within; and the secret source of the meaning that dwells in everything. Were he at all away, we might step forth to seek him; did he ever slumber, we might watch for the date of his waking times. But living forever in us and around us, he does not enable us to compare his presence with his absence: if we miss him, it is from his perpetuity and nearness; if we meet him, it is not by feeling after him abroad, but by dropping inward and returning home. The differences by which he is revealed are in us and not in him; in our faculty of recognition, by no means in his constancy of action. His light is alive in the very hearts that neglect or deny him; and in those that most own him is latent a thousand times for once that it flashes on their conscious eye. But there are moments when the beauty of the universe looks in at us with a meaning quite divine; or the crises of history shake us as the visible drama of Providence; or the eye of appealing misery burns into the place of pity in our souls, and we know it to be *his* sympathy as well as *ours;* or a new insight of duty opens a path which he alone could show. In these instances, we strain no ingenuity to discover him; it is he who comes to us and finds us; his presence rises of itself, and the revelation is spontaneous. Our sole concern is to accept it, to revere it, to follow it, to live by it.

Thus the true attitude of the devout mind always involves a certain quietism and self-relinquishment. Instead of pressing curiously forward, it sinks in meditation back, rests upon the present moment as divine, and feels the very pavement beneath its feet as holy. It has neither any distance to go, nor any time to wait, in order to close in with the spirit of God; only to own and trust him now and here, to pass into his hand with simple faith, a disarmed and unreluctant captive to his will. To commune with God,

there is need of no subtle thought, no foreign tongue, no newest philosophy: "the pure in heart shall see him;" and Fox and Bunyan can more truly make him known, than "Masters of Sentences" and "Angelic Doctors." Whatever is most deep within us is the reflection of himself. Whatever dawn of blessed sanctity, and waking of purer perceptions, opens to our consciousness, is the sweet touch of his morning light within us. His inspiration is perennial; and he never ceases to work within us, if we consent to will and to do his pleasure. He befriends our moral efforts; encourages us to maintain our resolute fidelity and truth; and reveals to us many things far too fair and deep for language to express. Finding a holy of holies within us, we need not curiously ask whether its secret voices are of ourselves or of the Father. Christ felt how, within the deeps of our spiritual nature, the personalities of heaven and earth might become entwined together and indissolubly blended. "Thou Father, art in me, and I in thee, and they also one in us." And so the holy spirit within us, the spirit of Christ and the spirit of God, are after all but one,—a blessed Trinity, our part in which gives to our souls a dignity most humbling, yet august.

James Martineau.

Personality of God.

Can we speak of God as a person? And in what sense can we use that term? I answer that, so far as religious uses are concerned, it is useless to talk of a God who is not in some sense person. Necessity, Fate, does not make a God; nor power nor intelligence alone; nor Mr. Arnold's "Eternal, not ourselves, that makes for righteousness." These may suggest the origin or express the moral order of the universe; but they do not constitute a God whom one can pray to,—a God whom one would care to worship, or would ever draw near to and seek to commune with. The God of our devotion, if devotion is anything more than an empty farce, must be, in some sense, person. And in what sense? I include in that idea intelligent will, providential care, and a moral government of the universe.

* * In this sense, then, the God of religion must be a person. The God of our devotion must be a person; but devotion does not require that we invest that person with a human form. God must be conceived as Father, in order that we may get the nearest access to him and the best enjoyment of his idea. The love of God must be conceived as paternal, in order that we may conceive of God's loving at all.

Again, we call God moral governor and judge, and we are right in so doing. The God of religion must be human. But this human God must be infinitely human—man, without man's infirmities and bounds; personal, without individuality; the Father, without parental doting; the moral ruler, without vindictiveness.

All that is essential in our idea of God we get, not from the understanding, but from the heart; and all that is essential in it is secured to us by the heart's perpetual needs. Philosophy may assail the conception, and science may disown the idea; but they furnish nothing that can fill its place. The pure in heart will still see God. The pure heart is a little child that knows its Father and will hear of no substitute. In the morning of creation it sought and found the unseen Friend when "Enoch walked with God." From the "house of bondage," in after years, it sent up a sigh, and received for answer the great word, "I am." In the noontide of history, it paused to listen and learned to say, "Our Father in Heaven." And when time is old, when science has fulfilled its career, and speculation repeated its ever-recurring circle, and both have confessed their incompetence alike to grasp or refute, when prophecies fail, and tongues have ceased, and fancied knowledge of the absolute vanished away,—the heart, the eternal child, with invincible faith, will still rejoice in Him "in whom we live and move and have our being."

F. W. Hedge.

There is an Infinite and Eternal Energy from which all things proceed. This is

as much more certain than any phenomenal fact whatever, as is the general fact of seeing more certain than anybody's report of any particular thing stated to have been seen.

For my present purpose I care not by what name you call this Power, or, indeed, whether you name it at all; for any finite name must be utterly inadequate as a designation of the infinite.

But unless science is to stultify herself and deny her own essential postulates, she must admit that "nothing comes from nothing," and that "a stream cannot rise higher than its source." If, then, I may not talk of this Power as thinking or planning or loving or as personal — because all these are finite terms—still, by all the canons of science, I am bound to regard it as at least equal and adequate to these; for these are some of its finite manifestations. This power, then, is at least as much as we mean by intelligence and love and personality. Or as Herbert Spencer said to me one day, "I see no reason why we should not regard this Power as being as much above personality as we are higher than vegetable growths."

And I, for one, see no good reason for our being so afraid of being anthropomorphic. Whether afraid of it or not, we must be anthropomorphic until we cease to be *anthropoi*, men. We are just as anthropomorphic in chemistry as we are in theology. So long as we speak at all, we must use terms derived from our own experience. And even a partial expression may be more nearly correct than silence or no expression at all. And it is just as possible for one to be negatively dogmatic as to be positively so; and the former may be even farther from the truth than the latter. He who asserts mere force may be as dogmatic as he who asserts God. And, if he tells the theist that he does not know what God is, the theist has a perfect right to retort that he does not know what force is.

M. J. Savage.

God a Father.

There is one view of God particularly suited to elevate us: I mean the view of him as the "Father of our spirits;" as having created us with great powers to grow up to perfection. This one idea, expanded in the breast of the laborer, is a germ of elevation more fruitful than all science, no matter how extensive or profound, which treats only of outward finite things. And what is it to be a father? It is to communicate one's nature, to give life to kindred beings; and the *highest* function of a father is to educate the mind of the child, and to impart to it what is noblest and happiest in his own mind. God is our Father, not merely because he created us, or because he gave us enjoyment: for he created the flower and the insect, yet we call him not their father. This bond is a spiritual one. This name belongs to God because he frames spirits like himself, and delights to give them what is most glorious and blessed in his own nature. He has created us not only to partake of his works, but to be "partakers of a divine nature," not only to receive his gifts but to receive himself. He pervades, penetrates our souls. And he is thus near, not only to discern, but to act, to influence, to give his spirit, to communicate to us divinity. This is the great paternal gift of God.

Wm. Ellery Channing.

God is not only the Author of Nature; he is also our "Father in Heaven." Above and around all his actions in the physical creation there lies a diviner and a tenderer realm, an infinite circumambient space of his mind, that does not act on matter, but is only present with spirits. However vast and majestic the uniformities of nature, they are nevertheless finite: science counts them all. God, however, is not finite: he lives out beyond the legislation he has made; and his thought, which defines the rules of matter does not transmigrate into them and cease else-how to be; but merely flings out the law as an emanating act and himself abides behind as thinking power,—an eternal Spirit

with a boundless inner life still unexpressed. In this silent ocean of his being,—this transcendent spiritual sphere of his life, dwells the remaining element of the perfection which we seek. It is an all-embracing love, an inexhaustible holiness, an eternal pity, an immeasurable freedom of affection, whence all the regularities of his will spring forth, and which leaves enough behind to visit the private wants of every soul, to linger with tenderness near every sorrow, to be present with rescue in every temptation. This it is that is the real ground of our trust and love: God is not merely the power of nature, but the Father of Spirits: his resources are not spent and used up in the legislation of the physical universe, but are large enough to overflow freely and copiously into the spirits that are in the likeness of himself. Hence, without violated rule, without breach of pledge, he can enter with gentle help into every mind, and while keeping faith with the universe, knock at the gate of every lonely heart. Stupendous as may be the network of determinate law, with threads fastened on every world, and continuous through all kosmic ages, there is room enough in the interstices for the free play of the spirit that passeth where it listeth, —for the movements of an everlasting moral life amid the natural,—and for all the swift pulses of divine affection. It is precisely in the union of these two,—a customary order he will not loose,—a free spirit he will not bind,—that God is perfect in himself and open to near communion as well as distant trust. Let man keep his thought and faith in sympathy with both sides of this great world which manifests the life of God,—its everlasting ways,—its ever-living spirit; and he shall blend the ground note of constant duty with the sweet and running melody of an ever varying love, and become at length "perfect as the Father in heaven is perfect."

James Martineau.

Jesus never used any word suggesting power chiefly, or holiness exclusively, in relation to the Creator. He never speaks of God as the Creator, or the Almighty, or the Sovereign, or the Infinite, or the Eternal. Neither of these words was ever used by Jesus, so far as the records tell us of his thought. Whenever he described God it was the word "Father," and only that, which he used. And when this word—the fountain of love—was added to the conception which the Old Testament had traced in fire of the personality and righteousness of the Infinite, the structure of the Bible as the educator of the world's religious sentiment was complete. God is one, God is holy, God is the Father,—the Infinite is love; then the attraction is complete in the heavens for all the faculties of man, and for all human faculties in every race, in every age, and in all stages of progress and attainment. "The day when Jesus pronounced this word 'Father,'" says Ernest Renan, "he was truly Son of God. He spoke, for the first time, the sure word on which the edifice of eternal religion shall rest. He founded the pure worship, of no land, of no date, which all lofty souls will practice to the end of time. His religion that day was not only the religion good for humanity; it was absolute religion; and if other planets have inhabitants endowed with reason and morality, their religion can be no other than that which Jesus proclaimed at Jacob's well. The word of Jesus has been a gleam in a dark night. But the gleam will become the full day; and after having run through the whole circle of errors, mankind will return to that word as the imperishable expression of its faith and its hopes." The soul in which faith in the paternity of the Infinite has its home, however slight may be its attainment in knowledge, has reached the height of inward peace and rest.

T. Starr King.

God in Nature and Life.

We are in the midst of a wonderful world. Talk about it how you will; call it universe, call it world, call it God; think of a soul separate from the sum of things, or think of God only as the soul of the world, feeling, thrilling, and thinking through it all, as our soul feels, thrills, and thinks through every fibre of

our bodies ; think of it in any way you please, here is this grand stupendous fact : we stand in the presence of an infinite and eternal being ; a being out of whose life we have been born ; a being who feeds us and clothes us every day ; a power who cares for us ; a being in the keeping of whose law is life, in the disregard of whose law is death; a being on whom we are dependent every moment of our lives. I say, think of him as you please. But whatever thought you may choose to have about it, whatever name you may choose to call this being by, he manifests himself as what? As power, as order, as beauty, as life, as thought, as love, as pity, as tenderness, as care, as mercy, as forgiveness,—all these things and unspeakably more are the outcome and manifestation of this infinite being. And he is at least as much as the sum of all his manifestations.

According to the marvelous story of modern science, nature is all instinct with the life of God, and he manifests himself through it in every part. I pluck a rose in my garden, and look at it; I smell its fragrance; I rejoice in its beauty. The life that developed this flower of beauty, so unlike anything out of which it was born,—this is the presence of the eternal and unseen mystery that I call God. It is God's beauty that paints its petals; it is God, the infinite artist, that shaped its leaves. I sit on the shore in the summer, and, as the tide rises, the waves come rolling in upon the sand. I follow these little wavelets that laugh and sing and murmur on the hard floor at my feet. I follow them out, some moonlight night, until two hundred thousand miles away I reach the moon; and I say it is the moon that lifts and tosses and moves this endless, shifting scene of beauty. I trace it further, and I know that the sun has something to do with it. Thus I follow on the law that links the earth, the moon, and the sun, and, beyond this system, a further system among the countless number of those that make up the infinite depths of the starry heavens; and, lo! I am in the presence of an infinite, inexplicable life. It is God's power that tosses the wave at my feet,—the power that manifests itself in every most distant system. I look upon the majesty of the mountains, and it is no longer a high place for devil-worship, as men so long have imagined: that sublimity is the sublimity of God. I listen to the air as it rustles among the tops of the trees ; and am I not justified in thinking as did the old prophet, when he said the chariot of God was moving in the tops of the mulberry trees? It is these tree-tops touched and bent and bowed by the sweep of the garment of God as he passes by. And so nature everywhere thrills and is instinct with the presence and the life of this infinite spirit.

And if we turn from this, which is the manifestation of the life of God in nature, to our human affairs, what shall we find? The whole human race together, with all its skill and all its genius and all its power through its whole life on earth, has never yet succeeded in creating or destroying one single particle of dust, or even of gas or air. The human race makes nothing: it simply learns the laws of God, and complies with the conditions, and waits for this mysterious power of the universe to create all riches and fling them at its feet. What is the work of the farmer or agriculturist? He simply tears a little of the surface of the earth and drops in his seed, and waits while God unfolds this marvelous mystery of life and growth. What goes on when a man is engaged in the work of exchange? A train of cars rapidly flies over the plains, crosses rivers, and rushes through mountain defiles from one land to another, and is dragged by what? Is it the genius of Watt, the marvelous power and intellectual insight of Stephenson? What did all these do? Simply learned the way of God in a particle of water,—that was all. And this train of cars is dragged on its wonderful flight by the power of God, just as really as though it were a chariot flying through the air, harnessed to a band of angels. And so the shipmaster takes the trees that God by his wondrous and inexplicable power and life has developed through the ages in the forests, drags them to his shipyard, builds them, by the power of God that holds them together and keeps them in their places, into his wondrous structure

of a ship; and God's law of gravity pushes it off the ways and slides it into the ocean, and the waters bear it up in their arms, and God's winds catch its sails, or God's power in the steam confined in the engines turns the wheels that drive it in the face of the wind and storm, and bears it everywhere over the earth, laden with the riches that God, and not man, has developed out of the infinite resources of the world.

And God is very near to us in places where we talk only of human sympathy and human love in the relations of our daily life. Take this wonderful power that we call love,—we think that in naming we have explained it,—that binds two together, that builds a home, that is the basis of the civilization of the world,—what is it? It is the manifestation of this infinite, tender, creative power and love of God. Or take the mother's love for her wayward, wandering child,—the child that answers love with scorn, or with indifference, which is worse; that wanders over the earth, despising the household teaching and the household affection; and see the mother's love following such a child, pleading with it, waiting for it, loving against love, loving against hope,—here, friends, are the tenderness and the pity and the mercy of the human heart alone, do you say? I say, the tenderness and love and pity of God. For whence did it come? Have you explained it when you have stopped with the individual? Have you explained the century-old oak when you have cut it close to the root, and simply look at it, trunk, branches, and leaflets? It runs down its roots into the earth, and is a part of the life from which it has sprung. And so when you have described the life of any individual, all this love, this tenderness, this pity, this mercy of man, you have explained nothing. Man himself, in all his glory and beauty of tenderness, is only a manifestation of the infinite life and love of God. He has come out of God as much as the oak tree springs out of the earth.

From this nearness of God to us there ought to come into our hearts trust; there ought to come patience and waiting. Nothing that needs to be accomplished for the good of man ought to seem hopeless to us. And when we think that it is this infinite mystery of life that is all around us and in us, our whole life ought to become no longer secular and profane, but sacred.

M. J. Savage.

God and a Future Life.

If we believe in God at all, the only adequate conception of him which will satisfy our intellect and heart alike is one which conceives of him as the sole self-existent Being and of everything and every one as having Being only in his being. The life of the universe of matter and spirit is *one life*,—the life of God infinitely conditioned in and through a myriad of forms. There is not a shred of the world called the world of nature which is not held in him, and is not, indeed, his thought. We all *are*, only because we are in him and part of his being, our personality held in his personality. Do not call this pantheism. It may be pantheism, but it is something more than pantheism. It is not saying the universe is God: it is saying God is the universe and something more than the universe. It is the doctrine which St. Paul inferred from the old Greek poet: "In him we live and move and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, 'For we are also his offspring.'" It is the doctrine of St. Paul himself: "Of him and by him and through him are all things;" and the moment we fully conceive that he alone *is*, and that nothing is which is not he, it becomes intellectually absurd that any soul should go out as a candle. Once having been, once having had consciousness, once having had personality, it is impossible to lose being, consciousness, personality. That which is in God, in eternal Being, cannot perish.

The act of creation lays on us a duty. We bring a child into the world, and the absolute imperative of God is upon us to

feed, clothe, educate, and love to the end that to which we have given life. It is so I firmly believe with God and men. By the very act of creation, God has laid upon himself a necessity of redemption. We wander from him, and he punishes us through his spiritual laws; we reap that which we have sown; we fill our belly with the husks which the swine eat. He lets us eat of the fruit of our own devices, the day of retribution comes, and our pleasures turn to gall, our irritated desires become our hell. Lower and lower still we sink, and suffering is hard on us; for impenitent man must touch the abyss of God's chastening tenderness before pride and self be conquered into penitence. But God waits and works: "Them also I must bring," speaks the necessity which flows from his Fatherhood. All through our deepest ruin, God's victorious love is opposed to man's reluctant hatred and despair, till at last they, being of the finite finite, and of the dead things of the universe dead, are shattered to pieces by persistent love; and the child, come to himself, calls out from the depths of a divine misery, "I will arise, and go to my Father." Far off his father sees him, and in triumphant joy receives him: "This my son was dead, and is alive again; was lost, and is found." It will be thus within eternity, till, in the fullness of charity, there shall be at last one flock and one shepherd.

Stopford Brooke.

God and Religion, Worship, Prayer.

Religion recognizes and adores God as a being whom we know through our own souls; who has made man in his own image; who is the perfection of our own spiritual nature; who has sympathies with us as kindred beings; who is near us, not in place only, like this all-surrounding atmosphere, but by spiritual influence and love; who looks on us with parental interest; and whose great design it is to communicate to us forever, and in freer and fuller streams, his own power, goodness, and joy. The conviction of this near and ennobling relation of God to the soul, and of his great purposes toward it, belongs to the very essence of true religion.

Religion demands that he who is supreme in the universe should be supreme in the human soul. God, to whom belongs the mysterious and incommunicable attribute of Infinity; who is the fullness and source of life and thought, of beauty and power, of love and happiness; on whom we depend more intimately than the stream on the fountain, or the plant on the earth in which it is rooted,—this Great Being ought to call forth peculiar emotions, and to move and sway the soul, as he pervades creation, with unrivalled energy. It is his distinction, that he unites in his nature infinite majesty and infinite benignity, the most awful with the most endearing attributes, the tenderest relations to the individual with the grandeur of the universal sovereign; and, through this nature, he is fitted to act on the mind as no other being can,—to awaken a love more intense, a veneration more profound, a sensibility of which the soul knows not its capacity, until it is penetrated and touched by God. To bring the created mind into living union with the Infinite mind, so that it shall respond to him through its whole being, is the noblest function which this harmonious and beneficent universe performs. The Christian teacher is to make more audible, and to interpret, the voice in which the beauty and awfulness of nature,—the heavens, the earth, fruitful seasons, storms and thunder,—recall men to their Creator. His great purpose is to give vitality to the thought of God in the human mind; to make God's presence felt; to make him a reality, and the most powerful reality to the soul. The mind, in proportion as it is enlightened and penetrated by true religion, thirsts and labors for a godlike elevation. If I am capable of receiving and reflecting the intellectual and moral glory of my Creator, what else in comparison shall I desire?

Worship is man's highest end, for it is the employment of his highest faculties and affections on the sublimest object.

We have much to thank God for, but

for nothing so much as for the power of knowing and adoring himself. This creation is a glorious spectacle, but there is a more glorious existence for our minds and hearts, and that is the Creator. There is something divine in the faculties by which we study the visible world, and subject it to our wills, comfort and enjoyment. But it is a diviner faculty, by which we penetrate beyond the visible, free ourselves of the finite and the mutable, and ascend to the Infinite and the Eternal. It is good to make earth and ocean, winds and flames, sun and stars, tributary to our present well-being. How much better to make them ministers to our spiritual wants, teachers of heavenly truth, bonds of union between man and his Maker!

Wm. Ellery Channing.

"Out of the depths have I cried unto thee." I love those words. They have the mingled flavor of earth and heaven in them. "Out of the depths" men have cried unto God in all the ages, and been heard. And not with groans only, but with praises also, have "the depths" been filled. The saints who have passed through much tribulation have made them the hiding-places of their piety, and the peaceful skies have shot rays of light into those dark places. The elect of God have been educated there for a higher life. Men have become angels by passing through the deep, when the waters went over their heads and God was their only salvation.

Have you ever cried and not been heard? It is possible, for the cry must be wrung from the heart, not go up from the lips alone. There *is* prayer that is no prayer; prayer that has no efficiency, because it has no importunity; prayer that lacks meaning because it lacks faith. Communion of the soul with God, such is our definition of true prayer. Speaking is not praying. Neither is a life of active obedience prayer, though it has been so styled. Prayer is the intercourse of the soul with God through offices of faith and supplication. He who sends up the cry must have faith, perfect faith in God,—in God as one who is attentive to every want and every request of his creatures; not bound by his love for man to grant every request with which he may be approached, for such an obligation would make divine power the dependent minister of the human will,—but ready and sure to arrange the discipline, if it may not be taken off, in the way most suited to benefit the sufferer, and even to yield him a better experience than exemption from the discipline would be. Man may not dictate the reply he shall receive, but he may rely on the divine compassion to do just that which is best for the suppliant, whether it be to remove the trial or send down strength to bear it. The cup did not, according to the terms of his prayer, pass undrained from him who was the best-beloved of the Father, but a peace such as the Father only could give settled upon his spirit.

Ezra Stiles Gannett.

Children, the Lord's prayer is a mighty prayer; ye know not what ye pray for in it. God is himself the Kingdom, and in that kingdom he reigns in all intelligent creatures. Therefore what we ask for is God himself with all his riches. In that kingdom does God become our Father, and manifests there his fatherly faithfulness and fatherly power. And insomuch as he finds place in us to work, is his name hallowed and magnified, and made known. That his name should be hallowed in us, means that he should reign in us, and accomplish through us his rightful work. And thus is his will done here on earth as it is in heaven; that is, when it is done in us as it is in himself, in the heaven which he himself is. Herein is his righteousness shown, that he abideth ever with those who heartily seek him, and make him their end, and give themselves up to him. In such he reigns, and all vain care falls away of itself in those who thus keep close to God in true self-surrender. We ought to worship God in all places and at all times. He who will worship the Father must concentrate his whole mind in aspiration and faith. These are the highest powers of the soul; for they are above time and know nothing of time or of the body. When these highest powers of the soul are thus gathered together in prayer, the soul becomes inspired, and if henceforth the spirit cleave unto God in an entire union of the

will, it is "made a partaker of the divine nature;" and then, for the first time, does the man offer up true worship, for he has attained the end for which he was created.

Doctor John Tauler, A.D. 1361.

Can he be said to be, in any proper sense, a religious man, who does not believe that God has any access to his soul, or care that he has any access to it, or who makes no dependence on God's help in his struggles with sin and his aspirations toward excellence? Why, even a dog can, in the inspiration of his master's presence, do what he is utterly unable to do alone. A child supported by the voice and eye of his mother is another being. And is a man, unconscious of God's eye and God's spirit, truly himself, or to be expected to be able to accomplish those moral and spiritual transformations, which convert the selfish into the disinterested, the passionate into the self-restrained, the vicious into the virtuous, the careless into the believing? * * * Man is, by his original constitution, a child of God, dependent for his support on his Father, dependent on him for his education and his setting up in the true life of the soul; and forgetting or denying this, he loses his courage, his confidence, his ability to make a true man of himself, and goes about like the prodigal, feeding with swine, an outcast and an alien. Away from God, he is in a most unnatural state—shorn of his strength, his wisdom, his only adequate guidance. * * * Suppose the miller, instead of opening the gate, and letting in the stream, should attempt to turn his wheel by main strength! This is what we do when we cease from prayer, fail to put our souls in communication with God, and to open our hearts to the glorious visitations of his power.

H. W. Bellows.

To the disciples when they besought the Master, "Teach us to pray," Jesus replied: "When ye pray, say, Our Father." All along down the ages, from Jesus' day to this, humble, burdened, sorrowing, trusting souls have been repeating the prayer, "Our Father," and finding in it inexpressible comfort and hope. At last the light of science shines on the world, and men are advancing to a thought of God different from that which has been. But lo! I see men, women and children, everywhere, with upturned faces still saying, "Our Father," and no whit of the power or sweetness of the prayer is gone. But rather has it grown to a richer meaning than ever it had before; for now, with the better thought of God which is appearing, heaven comes down to earth as never before, and God, the All Father—the All Father because the Infinite Wisdom, and Power and Life—dwells no longer throned in solitary majesty in the far-off skies, but has his throne and dwelling place among men, here, everywhere, by every hearthstone, in the glory of every sunset cloud, amidst the petals of every opening flower, in the aspirations and yearnings of every human heart. Oh, the larger and sweeter, as well as worthier thought of God, which, with the passing away of superstition, and the growth of knowledge, is rising on our modern age! Not less, but vastly more, does it mean now, to bow the head and say "God," than it ever meant before.

J. T. Sunderland

"We say, 'Our Father,' when we wake:—
What with the sunrise seems to break
Through every flower like a surprise,
As if a thousand loving eyes
Looked out from sunbeams, buds and dew,
And said, 'He is Our Father, too.'

We, little children, stand and gaze
At the white evening star, whose rays
Beam down upon us like an eye
Forever open in the sky,—
Through the strange twilight asking this
Of one another, 'Is it his?'

Who is he? That we cannot say.
He is. And by his side to stay,
To love him in the flowers and birds,
In dear home faces, tender words,
In all things beautiful and true,—
No more than this we ask to do.

Our Father, every day more dear
It seems to live with thee so near;
Thou carest for even the smallest star,
And safe within thy heart we are.
If left alone on earth are we,
We are not orphans,—WE HAVE THEE."

Lucy Larcom.